

article is made from an elastomeric matrix having an outside surface. In accordance with the present invention, a plurality of particles, such as colloidal silica particles, are adhered to at least a portion of the outside surface. As stated on page 7 of the specification and as required in claim 12, the silica particles can be partially embedded within the outside surface of the elastomeric article (see Figure 2 also).

As defined in the specification, the outside surface of the glove refers to the exterior surface of the glove or the surface that is used to grasp objects. As stated on page 4 of the specification, the particles of the present invention are selectively present on the outside surface of the article to provide increased friction. In this manner, when applied to a glove, the glove has improved gripping properties. Further, it has been discovered that the particles provide improved gripping properties even when the outside of the glove is wet.

In the Office Action, independent claims 12 and 14 continue to stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,332,612 to Payet, et al. Independent claims 1 and 31 continue to stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,620,773 to Nash in view of Payet, et al. It is maintained that neither reference, either alone or in combination, discloses an elastomeric article or a process for making the article in which a plurality of particles, such as colloidal silica particles, are applied to the outside surface of the article. As such, the claims are believed to clearly and patentably define over the cited references.

Payet, et al. is particularly directed to forming a latex jacket around an article made of silicon elastomer (see column 2, lines 7 through 9). Hydrophilic inorganic pulverulent material is deposited at the surface of the elastomer article and once coated with such

material, the article is immersed in an aqueous latex suspension (column 1, lines 48 through 55). As noted by the Examiner, Payet, et al. teaches that the particulate colloidal silica on the elastomer article assists in preventing the latex coating from forming droplets on the hydrophobic elastomeric substrate by absorbing the coagulant salt in the latex, so that the latex spreads evenly across over the elastomeric surface (column 1, lines 9-12 and the sentence bridging columns 1 and 2). The resulting composite article includes a film of hydrophilic inorganic pulverulent material at the interface between the silicone elastomer and the latex (see column 2, lines 37 through 41).

Thus, Payet, et al. teaches placing inorganic particles in between an outer latex layer and an elastomeric article. This is contrary to the present claims, which teach applying particles to the outside surface of an elastomeric article. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the claims patentably define over Payet, et al.

Nash is directed to securely embedding silica particles in the inside surface layer or donning layer of a glove. The examiner notes that the silica coating of Nash is, indeed, on the inner surface. The particles are embedded in the donning layer of the glove to provide a texturized surface which prevents blocking (i.e. prevents the gloves from sticking together) and provides a glove suitable for donning without the use of a lubricant such as powder. Nash states that the texturized surface has a lower coefficient of friction than a smooth surface which makes it easier for one to insert one's hand into the glove (column 3, line 49).

As such, the teachings of Nash are directly opposite to the present invention and, therefore, it is believed that Nash teaches away from the presently pending claims. While the present claims are directed to applying particles to the outside surface of an

elastomeric article, such as a glove, to improve the gripping properties of the glove, Nash teaches embedding silica particles in the donning layer of a glove to lower the coefficient of friction. When viewing Nash as a whole, it is respectfully submitted that it would not have been obvious to modify Nash in arriving at the presently pending claims.

In addition, even if Nash were combined with Payet, et al., the use of texturizing particles on the outer surface of elastomeric articles with latex coating is not suggested by reference to Payet, et al. As discussed previously, Payet, et al. teaches placing inorganic particles in between an outer latex layer and an elastomeric article. Thus, even if Payet, et al. is combined with Nash, the resulting combination would not disclose an elastomeric article or a process for making the article in which a plurality of particles are applied to the outside surface of the article. As such, the present claims are believed to clearly and patentably define over the cited references.


In the Office Action, dependent claim 10 continues to be rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103 in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,851,266 to Momose, et al. Since claim 10 further limits and defines the invention of claim 1, however, it is believed that the claims also patentably define over Momose, et al.

In summary, it is respectfully submitted that the claims as currently amended are patentably distinct over the prior art of record. As such, it is believed that the claims are in complete condition for allowance and favorable action is therefore requested. Examiner Nolan, however, is encouraged and invited to telephone the undersigned at her convenience should any issues remain after consideration of this amendment.

Please charge any additional fees required by this Amendment to Deposit Account No/ 1403.

1/30/02  
Date

Respectfully submitted,

  
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